

QUARTERLY NARRATIVE REPORTS FOR THE
SULLYS HILL WILDLIFE REFUGE
1935

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

IN REPLY REFER TO

Sullys Hill Game Preserve,
Ft. Totten, N. Dakota,
Dec. 31, 1935.

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is the quarterly report for this quarter and the calander year report for the year ending Dec. 31, 1935:

At the beginning of the calander year 1935 there were 19 buffalo and 35 elk (by estimate) on the Preserve. Two buffalo were disposed of for meat, 16 elk were disposed of alive and hauled to a private game Preserve in New York State. There were only seven elk calves by count as compared with an estimated ten so it was necessary to count three less elk and it has been necessary to deduct one elk due to the fact that one too many was counted in the past. At the end of the first quarter of calander year 1935 there were 17 buffalo, 15 elk and 11 white tail deer on the Preserve. (See report for quarter ending Mar. 31, 1935.) Below is given animals on Preserve for the last three quarters of the year:

	On Pres. end of first quarter.	Loss died	Increase birth	Jumped into-Sold Gift-Preserve	Left on PRES. 12/31, 1935.
Buffalo	17	0	1	0 0 3	15 ✓
Elk	15	0	5	0 0 0	20 ✓
Deer	11	1	4	2 1 1	16 ✓
	43	1	10	2 1 4	51

One two one-half year (would have been this fall) old deer was thin last spring and it is supposed that she died or one of the 1½ year old females died during the summer. Four 1935 young deer have been counted a number of times this winter. Four young ones seem to be all about the same size. This makes a total of 16 deer on the Preserve on Dec. 31, 1935.

Only one buffalo calf was born this summer. Three 1934 buffaloes with crooked legs were disposed of for meat. As near as can be decided, all of the other 1934 buffalo calves have straight legs. When their legs are crooked, it has been with the buffalo due to the leg turning in much at the hock joint or a part of the leg slipping back right below the hock joint as much as over an inch.

There were 15 elk on the Preserve at the end of the first quarter. The herd has been increased by at least five 1935 calves. At one time this fall 22 elk were counted but I do not wish to state that number as correct until at least two or three more counts can be made when the leaves are off and the snow on the ground. It is a very hard job to get a correct count of the elk herd.

The animals are all doing well except the seven year old buck deer. He is being kept inside a inclosed building and is well taken care of. He eats good but seems to be weak and is thin. The old buffalo bull has evidently been defeated by the younger animal from the Wind Cave Herd. The younger bull come around the corral recently and snorted a couple of times and walked towards a hill and on looking that way, the old buffalo was noticed to be almost running in the other direction.

The two deer received as a gift to this Preserve, were received from Mrs. Bacon of Grand Forks. One is the old buck that is not doing so well now. The other one is a very nice ~~2 1/2~~ year old female. The female is in good shape and doing well. She seems to get along with the other deer. It was necessary to put the old buck by himself so the other bucks would not kill him.

Seven beaver were shipped to this Preserve from the Niobrara Reservation last fall. Three of the beaver were later found dead as has been reported. As near as is known now, there are four beaver in the house on the east end of the small lake (a large male, a large female and two 1935 young ones, sex not known). The animals have not been seen since the ice has frozen over the water but they were heard at three different places making sounds one evening, they have made two different holes thru the ice at the edge of the lake and cut brush and dragged it under the ice. We believe that they are doing well. Much fresh water is still flowing into the lake. So far this winter about seven bushels of vegetables have been put in the beaver house and then the opening closed up again. We made them a good house and they went into it after a few days.

There are a number of racoons, a few mink, a few weasels and a very few muskrats on the Preserve. We do all we can to protect the animals that are not too destructive to other animal life but as soon as they get outside the Preserve fence, the Indians or some white men will be after them. So there is no chance of them becoming very numerous as the Preserve area is rather small.

It has been reported to me that about ten years ago a few pair of gray tree squirrels were turned loose at the Devils Lake City Park (a timbered area on the north side of the lake and about ten miles from the Sullys Hill Preserve). Tree squirrels have increased so in numbers that we can see a few near the buildings or in the picnic grounds any nice day. We even see or hear them now during the winter when the weather gets up about 15 degrees above zero. At least one black squirrel has been noticed near the buildings. They are not bothered here on the Preserve.

Birds *burn*
Pheasants, partridge and grouse have increased much during the past summer. We had very little rain during the spring and very little rain during the fall and so during the time of the spring migration and during the fall migration there was but few areas of fresh water and but few water birds stopped in this region during the spring or fall. Almost no geese stopped here and but few ducks.

Frogs, salamanders and grass snakes have been much more numerous this year than last year. This increase in numbers is due to the rain received this year and but little moisture was received the year before. During December 1935, many bushels of fish-like life have been noticed in an open water hole in the lake where spring water enters the lake. These fish or animal life look very much like a salamander but they live in water, they have gills and tissue like fins. There does not seem to be any bones in the fins or flippers. They have four legs.

April, May, September and October of this year were very dry. Very little moisture was received during those months. June, July and August were months of an unusual rain fall for the said period and this region. All plants that were suitably located ~~all~~ made unusual growths. The pasture on the Preserve has furnished much food for the animals and some of the hill slopes that were bare in the spring were fairly well covered with plants by the end of August. The Sullys Hill pasture is rather small and must never be over grazed with browsing animals. The shrubs that the deer family browse on have already been killed off in places in the Preserve area. So fewer elk than more will be better for the shrubs.

Last fall there was almost no hunting of waterfowl in this region. There were but very few of the migratory birds that stopped in this region because there was very little fresh water here last fall. Care was taken to see that no hunting was done on the Preserve area. Fire guards were made around the winter supply of hay and we cleaned up around the buildings. Cleaning up around the buildings takes much time because they are located in the timbered area and the trees drop many leaves in the fall.

During the year no new improvements have been made but three buildings were painted, roads repaired and improved, some fire protection work done, visitors looked after and about 70 tons of hay put up on the lake bottom land. No hay had to be purchased this year.

The following visitors were to the Sullys Hill Preserve during the calander year ending Dec. 31, 1935:

	Cars.	Visitors.
Jan. 1st. to Mar. 31st.	00	00
April	17	99
May	339	2297
June	741	3154
July	923	4139
August	381	1865
September	392	1925
October	98	765
Nov. 1st. to Dec. 31st.	00	00
	<u>2,891</u>	<u>14,244</u>

*double
check*

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The total number of visitors has not increased due to the times being rather quite yet and there are many more out door places for people to go to than there were a few years ago. Also during the last ten years the roads have been made about 100 percent better. The public appreciates the use of the Sullys Hill Game Preserve and to be able to see the animals.

With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wesley D. Parker.

U. S. Game Management Agent.

P.S. On Dec. 9th. it was noticed that a $1\frac{1}{2}$ year female deer had a hind leg broken. The bone was sticking out over an inch and the leg could not get well. The deer was shot on Dec. 21st. and carcass sold for the best price that could be secured for it.

(copy sent to Mr. Laythe)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

IN REPLY REFER TO

Sullys Hill Game Preserve,
Ft. Totten, N. Dakota,
Sept. 30, 1935.

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is the quarterly report for the quarter ending September 30, 1935:

There are 18 buffalo, 20 elk and 16 ^{one} white tail deer (northern) on the Preserve at the end of the quarter. Only ^{one} buffalo calf has been born this summer as all of the cows had calves last summer. There were fifteen elk on the Preserve last spring and it has been estimated that there are at least five elk calves. Due to the thick timber and many bushes, the elk cannot be counted until the leaves have fallen and the snow is on the ground. There were eleven deer on the Preserve last spring. Two grown deer ^{were} donated to the Preserve last June by a private concern and three young deer have been seen during the summer. That makes a total of 16 deer. The animals are all doing very well.

We have no predatory animals on the Preserve that are doing damage at this time. There are a few racoon, mink and weasels which are classed more as fur animals.

During the last part of the quarter there have been many gulls at times resting on that part of Devils Lake which is apart of Sullys Hill Preserve. At ~~times~~ during the month of September there have been some ducks on the Sullys Hill part of Devils Lake. The ducks have increased in numbers during the last four weeks. Before that time, there were almost no ducks in this region. The ducks were mainly mallards ^{at one time} as near as could be decided. On an average there were about 200 noticed during the past two weeks. They were moving southward. During the past three weeks, many flickers ^{and} robins especially have been noticed on their way southward.

A few salamanders have been noticed recently. More of the striped grass snakes have been noticed this summer than last summer it is believed. There have been many frogs of all sizes in the low places and in the thick grass.

We have had much more moisture this summer than we have on a year of normal rain fall. The grazing in the pasture is very good for the animals. The grass in the lower places has been grazed but little. The grass has been eaten rather close on the ridges. There were a few places on the ridges that were almost bare last spring. These places have been covered over with plants during the summer.

Most of the preserve area is fenced. It is all well posted. A number of trips have been made around the fence and along the lake shore. The birds and animals have not been disturbed by hunters or others. During the last part of September much work has been done making the winter hay safe from fire and cleaning up around the buildings in the picnic grounds for the same purpose. We have kept the roads in the pasture black by blading them during the summer. The roads make good fire guards.

No new improvements have been made during the quarter. Three of the buildings have been painted that are in the picnic grounds, the visitors looked after, roads repaired and kept in shape and hay put up for the animals during the coming winter and some fire protection work done. The hay is raised on Preserve and Indian Agency Land. This land was part of the lake bottom of a bay of Devils Lake in the past. (I have been informed that the water was at least ten feet deep and there was a warf about the center of the said hay meadow, fifty years ago.) We have sowed the tame hay on the lake bottom land.

The following visitors were to the Preserve during the quarter:

	cars	visitors
July ..	923	4,139
August.	381	1,865
Sept.	<u>392</u>	<u>1 925</u>
	1,696	7,929

There were not so many visitors during this quarter as there were during the same quarter last year. The visitors were much pleased to see the small lake full of water. Last year the lake was dry.

All has been going along very well at this Preserve. Much work has been done recently for fire protection. As the leaves continue to fall, they will be raked up and hauled away from around the buildings. There are many leaves and all plants have grown much more than they did last year.

With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wesley D. Parker

U. S. Game Management Agent.



Most of the preserve area is fenced. It is all well posted. A number of traps have been made around the fence and along the lake shore. The birds and animals have not been disturbed by hunters or others. During the last part of September much work has been done making the winter hay safe from fire and cleaning up around the buildings in the picnic grounds for the same purpose. We have kept the roads in the pasture black by plowing them during the summer. The roads make good fire guards.

No new improvements have been made during the quarter. Three of the buildings have been painted that are in the picnic grounds, the visitors looked after, roads repaired and kept in shape and hay put up for the animals during the coming winter and some fire protection work done. The hay is raised on Preserve and Indian Agency land. This land was part of the lake bottom of a bay of Devils Lake in the past. (I have been informed that the water was at least ten feet deep and there was a wet about the center of the said hay meadow, fifty years ago.) We have sowed the same hay on the lake bottom land.

The following visitors were to the Preserve during the quarter:

cars	visitors
July .. 323	4,139
August. 381	1,865
Sept. 302	1,925
1,006	7,929

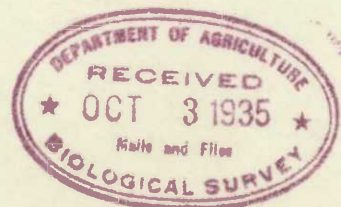
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With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wm. J. D. Danks
U. S. Game Management Agent.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

IN REPLY REFER TO

Sullys Hill Game Preserve,
Ft. Totten, N. Dakota,
June 30, 1935.

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is the quarterly report and the Fiscal Year Report for the period ending June 30, 1935.

There were 27 buffalo on the Preserve at one time last fall. Ten buffalo were disposed during the winter. The 17 buffalo left on the Preserve are in very fine condition. So far this summer, there are no new calves. According to the reports made out, there were 46[✓] elk on the Preserve. Last October one bull elk was ~~killed~~^{killed} by another elk. 26[✓] elk were disposed of during the winter. (16 of the elk disposed of were hauled in two truck loads to New York state and put in a private Game Refuge.) According to the estimate or last summer report, there should have been 19 elk left but by count there were 15 elk left. The mistake was made in that more elk calves were estimated in the herd during the summer of 1934 than there were. There are 20 elk now on the Preserve. It has been estimated that there are five 1935 elk calves in the herd.

At one time last fall there were 13 deer here. One buck was shipped away to a private game preserve and one young buck died. There were 11 deer left then. One 1935 fawn was noticed recently and two deer were received from Mr. Bacon of Grand Forks as a gift to Sullys Hill Preserve. There are a total of 14 deer here now. Six Canada Geese were shipped to the Niobrara Game Preserve this spring.

✓ Raccoons are becoming rather numerous on the Preserve. There are a few skunks, weasels, and mink in this region. The gray tree squirrels come into this area about a year ago. Many of them were noticed last fall and young ones have been raised here this spring. The animals are not harmed since there are ~~are~~ few of the ones that do much damage.

We have had more misture in this region than we have had for some years but it just soaks into the soil. There are ~~few~~ or no more fresh water areas here than there were a year ago. To the best of my knowledge, there are few if any more water birds here than there were a year ago because there are few fresh water areas. It is believed that more young water birds will be raised this year than there were raised here last year. There are many more other birds here than there were here a year ago. In fact there seem to be more song birds and birds that are not game birds in this region than there have been here for many years. Also pheasants, and partridge are increasing but the grouse and prairie chickens are becoming fewer in numbers.

The grass in the pasture is of a good quality and there is plenty for the animals that are now here. The dry weather during the past three years, and the grazing killed off about a half of the grass in the open places. Many weeds are growing in the pasture. New weeds have been noticed first this year and last year. Many trees in the Pasture area did not leaf out this spring and are now dead. We have had plenty of moisture so far this year.

The Preserve land outside the fence is well posted and no hunting is done there or inside the fence. During the hunting season a close watch is kept to be sure that no hunting is done outside along the Devils Lake shore line which is a part of the Refuge. About 90 bushels of mixed grain was scattered out for upland game birds at suitable places for feeding where there were game birds during the last half of last winter. It is a fact that the said feeding saved many game birds from starving.) In the pasture the trails are kept black to act as fire guards, the hay corral has a fire guard around it and all material is kept cleaned away from buildings and other places where a fire might get started. There was danger of fire last fall due to the extra dry weather. There is little or no danger of fire on the Preserve so far during 1935.

During the last part of last summer and during last fall the Nira work at this Preserve was finished up. During that period about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of road were graveled in the picnic grounds area, trees and stumps were removed off of about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of fire trail in the pasture and the lake bed along the shore of the small lake in the picnic grounds was made deeper by hauling the bottom out of the bed and placing it on the land where it would do some good. The small lake was dry except for a little area of water about thirty feet square. It is now full of water. Also the job of driving the steel piling along the lower side of the small lake to hold the water was completed last summer under the Nira. All of the work done at the Sullys Hill Preserve under the Nira has been an added improvement. Each man working on the said work did a reasonable days work each and every day his name was on the pay roll. This work was a great help to the white people in this region.

About fifty acres of lake bottom land is farmed to raise hay for the three horses and game animals at this Preserve. Last summer only five tons of hay were purchased to feed the horses when working hard. Also a extra large stack of hay is being carried over until the fall of 1935 to feed the game animals. The buffalo, elk and deer do very well on the yellow sweet clover hay where it is put up in good shape. We also feed them some wild hay and oats hay.

The number of visitors given below have been to the Preserve during the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1935:

	Cars.	Visitors.
July 1934	978	5123
August "	457	2568
September "	246	1187
October "	95	478
Nov. & Dec. "	33	212
Jan. 1st to Apr. 30, 1935	17	99
May "	339	2297
June "	741	3154
	<hr/> 2,906	<hr/> 15,118

Times have still continued quite in this region during the past Fiscal Year and there has been very little money to spend except for the absolutely necessary things. For the above reason not so many visitors have been to the Preserve as we have had in the past. Also the weather

has been very cold and rainy during this spring. It is believed that the number of visitors coming to the Preserve will increase as times get better. It is believed that there will be a good crop in this region this fall and then there would be good or at least fair times in the wheat country.

Under the Submarginal Land Program, options have been taken on about 2700 acres of land that joins the Preserve on the south. It is not known yet if the land will be purchased but we hope so as it is much needed if a fair number of game animals are to be kept on the Preserve. Also the land that it is proposed to add to the Preserve will support many upland game birds and some water birds. We are very much interested in the enlarging of the Preserve.

With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wesley D. Parker.

U. S. Game Management Agent.



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With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wesley D. Barber
U. S. Game Management Agent.



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

IN REPLY REFER TO

Sullys Hill Game Preserve,
Ft. Totten, N. Dakota,
March 31, 1935.

Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

This is the quarterly report for the quarter ending Mar. 31, 1935.

There were 19 buffalo, 35 elk (according to estimate) and 12 white tail deer. ^{January 1st.} During The quarter 2 buffalo were disposed of for meat, sixteen elk were disposed of alive and hauled to a private game Preserve at Nunda N. Y. and one 1934 buck deer died during March. (It was estimated last summer as has been reported that there were 10 1934 elk calves. By count this winter it was found that there were only seven so 3 elk more were deducted from the total.) At the end of March there are the following game animals on the Preserve; 17 buffalo ; 15 elk and eleven white tail deer. As a whole the animals are all in good shape. There were two of the 1934 deer that were small last fall and wild. They did not come up regular for oats. Both of them become thin and one died. Deer are very mean to each other when feeding. The other deer would pick on the two small ones often and the young animals were more timid for that reason.

During the last three months the tracks of a few skunks have been seen. Many tracks have been noticed in the big pasture of racoons. It is believed that there are about a dozen racoons on the Preserve area. Tracks of minks two different times noticed recently and the trails of about three weasels. Many tracks have been noticed in the snow of the dark tree gray squirrel. All of the animals are protected on the Preserve except weasels and minks if they commence to bother the canada geese. The Indians and some white people hunt and trap all around the Preserve Area and all of the surplus fur animals are caught.

Two golden eagles have been noticed many times during the last three months. They feed on jack rabbits out on the prairie and roost in some of the larger trees on this timbered area. They do no harm here as far as is known. One hundred fifty bushels of mixed grain were shipped to the Preserve to feed the upland game birds. Eighteen stations were located off of the Preserve and three on the Preserve land. The stations were located (picked out) only where birds in numbers were known to be. As a rule some local farmer was consulted before any grain was put out. In this way the farmer would watch that no shooting was done near the feeding places. About 90 to 100 bushels of grain was put out for the birds. The stations were located around hay stacks, old straw stacks, along the south slopes of hills and along the edge of highways where the snow would not collect. Local people and myself believe many birds were saved by this feeding. Grouse, pheasants, partridge and a few prairie chickens come for the grain. The first two named are rather plentiful in this region. Almost all of the grain that was put out as described was cleaned up. All of the snow is off in the open and the birds are feeding in the fields.

Feeding
Station
delate

There is some grass in the timbered area for the animals to graze on but this grass is of a poor quality. In the open part of the pasture there is almost no old grass for the animals to feed on. The grass in the open grew but little last summer due to the dry weather. The elk have eaten the brush(that they like) down rather close. Due to the dry weather many of the trees on the timbered area are dead now and will never put fourth new leaves. We have plenty of hay at the Preserve yet. It will be necessary to put out hay(especially for the buffalo)until at least the middle of May. The elk will brouse much from now on. The grass on the south hill slopes is still in fair shape for growing(it is believed after the dry years) as soon as we have warm weather. But if we should have another dry year now, some of the grass would be apt to die and rains would cause washing .

The fence is patrolled from once to twice a week according to the weather. During the stormy weather,fence is patrolled more often. No signs of coyotes were noticed during the winter. Deer tracks were noticed just outside the fence a number of times this winter. There are about a dozen deer in the timbered area east of the Preserve. We have but little danger of fires on this Preserve if we have a fair amount of rain. But during a dry year like the one just passed, much care is taken to prevent a fire in the dry leaves or around the buildings.

1934
Crops
Put in 1935
can.
Last fall, rye was seeded on ten acres of land where it is believed the second cutting of sweet clover will cause another crop of sweet clover to start this summer. We have about 33 acres of other land that it has been planned to seed for hay and game bird feed. It has been planned to seed oats and wheat mixed with barley for hay. The grain will be cut medium early so the kernals will not drop out. The birds will be able to get much food by scratching in the stacks. We are very fortunate in being able to carry over to next year an extra large stack of very good hay for next year. Hay may be scarce next year. Animals have eaten much hay during the quarter.

Two men have been working some during the quarter, cutting and peeling two hundred oak posts that are needed to repair the inside fences. During the last part of the quarter some time has been spent studying the number of water birds that pass over this area on their way northward and also how the number going north this spring compares to the number going north last spring and etc. We have ^{had} but a few visitors during the quarter.

With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

Wesley D. Parker.

U. S. Game Management Agent.

P. S. Fifteen elk were counted in the pasture on February 3rd. So three were deducted for having made three too large an estimate of the 1934 elk calves and one more has been deducted for one more counted than there should have been counted. Very difficult job counting elk in timber.



There is some grass in the timbered area for the animals to graze on but this grass is of a poor quality. In the open part of the pasture there is almost no old grass for the animals to feed on. The grass in the open grew but little last summer due to the dry weather. The elk have eaten the brush (that they like) down rather close. Due to the dry weather many of the trees on the timbered area are dead now and will never put fourth new leaves. We have plenty of hay at the Preserve yet it will be necessary to put out hay (especially for the buffalo) until at least the middle of May. The elk will browse much from now on. The grass on the south hill slopes is still in fair shape for growing (it is believed after the dry years) as soon as we have warm weather. But if we should have another dry year now, some of the grass would be apt to die and rains would cause washing.

The fence is patrolled from once to twice a week according to the weather. During the stormy weather, fence is patrolled more often. No signs of coyotes were noticed during the winter. Deer tracks were noticed just outside the fence a number of times this winter. There are about a dozen deer in the timbered area east of the Preserve. We have but little danger of fires on this Preserve if we have a fair amount of rain. But during a dry year like the one just passed, much care is taken to prevent a fire in the dry leaves of around the buildings.

Last fall, we was seeded on ten acres of land where it is believed the second cutting of sweet clover will cause another crop of sweet clover to start this summer. We have about 33 acres of other land that it has been planned to seed for hay and game bird feed. It has been planned to seed oats and wheat mixed with barley for hay. The grain will be cut medium early so the kernels will not drop out. The birds will be able to get much food by scratching in the stacks. We are very fortunate in being able to carry over to next year a large stack of very good hay for next year. Hay may be scarce next year. Animals have eaten much hay during the winter.

Two men have been working some during the winter, cutting and peeling two hundred oak posts that are needed to repair the inside fences. During the last part of the winter some time has been spent studying the number of water birds that pass over this area on their way northward and also how the number going north this spring compares to the number going north last spring and etc. We have but a few visitors during the winter.

With the kindest of regards, I am;

Very truly yours,

U. S. Game Management Agent.

P. S. Fifteen elk were counted in the pasture on February 2nd. So three were deducted for having made three too large an estimate of the 1934 elk calves and one more has been deducted for one more counted than there should have been counted. Very difficult job counting elk in timber.

